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OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Letter dated 9 September 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the communiqué of the nineteenth meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs (SCMFA) of the Caribbean Community, which was held at St. George's, Grenada, from 10 to 11 May 1993 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 10, 18, 31, 40, 42, 43, 91, 95, 99, 103, 112, 114, 140 and 153.

(Signed) Eugene M. PURSOO
Permanent Representative of the
Permanent Mission of Grenada
to the United Nations

ANNEX

Communiqué issued on 11 May 1993 at St. George's, Grenada, by the nineteenth meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community

The Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs (SCMFA) of the Caribbean Community held its Nineteenth Meeting in St. George's, Grenada on 10-11 May 1993. The Meeting was attended by all States comprising the membership of the Standing Committee. The Heads of Delegation were: Mr. Eric Challenger, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and Planning, Antigua and Barbuda; Hon. Algernon Allen, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Bahamas; Hon. Maurice King, Attorney-General and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Barbados; Hon. Said Musa, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Economic Development, Belize; Ms. Judith Pestaina, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and OECS Unity, Dominica; Rt. Hon. Nicholas Brathwaite, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Grenada; Hon. Clement Rohee, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Guyana; Dr. the Hon. Paul Robertson, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Jamaica; H.E. Dr. William V. Herbert, Minister of Foreign Affairs (ag.), St. Kitts and Nevis; Hon. George Mallet, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs, CARICOM Affairs, Trade and Industry, Saint Lucia; Hon. Herbert Young, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Tourism, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and Hon. Ralph Maraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Edwin Carrington, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, chaired the Opening Ceremony.

The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Brathwaite, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Grenada, delivered the Feature Address.

The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Brathwaite pointed to the merits of sharing our resources in an international environment that is becoming increasingly insensitive to the concerns of small states. He noted that:

> "The impact on our small undiversified economies of free or liberalised trade regimes, regional trading or mega-blocs and the length and depth of the recession in the major industrialized countries should force us to take advantage of our many similarities and common features to submerge our individual national interests and deepen our relationship, thereby strengthening our bargaining power as one people and one regional family".

The Meeting was addressed by the Hon. Algernon Allen, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Bahamas, as outgoing Chairman of the Standing Committee.

The Hon. Said Musa, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Economic Development, Belize, replied on behalf of visiting delegations.

The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Brathwaite was elected Chairman of the Meeting and the new Chairman in office of the Standing Committee. At his request, the Hon. Francis A. Alexis, Attorney-General and Minister for CARICOM Affairs, Grenada chaired the proceedings.

THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

The Ministers recognised that they were meeting once again against the background of unpredictable and rapidly changing global circumstances, the effects of which are being experienced at the regional level. They noted, in particular, the emphasis on economic power by the

coalescence of large economic blocs and the widening economic disparity between the developed and the developing countries. The Minister also noted the imposition of more stringent conditionalities on the trade of developing countries which frustrate their efforts towards the enhancement of their international competitiveness. They recognised that the challenges facing the Region remained complex and numerous and that these challenges taxed the resources of regional states in adequately coming to terms with them.

Against this background, the Ministers concluded that the Caribbean would have to move more concretely and expeditiously to sound planning and positive joint action in order to develop responses that were adequate to the new realities.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

The Ministers reviewed developments towards NAFTA. They felt that NAFTA in its present form would adversely affect the economic development of the Region through the diversion of investment and trade. They therefore agreed that CARICOM should, in conjunction with other CBI beneficiary countries, use every opportunity to continue to make the case for protecting and extending CBI benefits.

The Ministers noted the growing movement towards regionalisation in North-America, Europe and the Pacific Rim and the growing trend towards globalisation of production, capital and distribution.

The Ministers expressed concern over the delay in concluding the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations while acknowledging that the process of

liberalisation of international trade presented special challenges, and difficulties, to the small open economies of the Community. They recognised that in view of the trends towards globalisation and of hemispheric and regional trade reform, Member States would have to take steps to restructure their economies and improve their productivity and competitiveness.

The Ministers were concerned at the rapid and continuing reduction in concessional resource flows to the Region. This is particularly significant since external debt servicing remains a critical problem for several Member States. The net effect is that development is being seriously constrained. The Ministers therefore reiterated their call for the international community, including the Multilateral Financial Institutions to find new and innovative ways of addressing the debt problem with a view to assisting developing countries and alleviating the resource constraint on their development.

The Ministers strongly repeated their call for increased access for their exports to the markets of the developed countries.

The Ministers underscored the need to strengthen the regional integration process as one means of responding to the changing economic environment.

CARICOM-LATIN AMERICA RELATIONS

The Ministers, in reviewing developments in CARICOM-Latin America Relations, recognised the need to upgrade the quality of those relations.

They expressed their willingness to enter into a similar trading agreement with Colombia, broadly similar to that recently concluded with Venezuela, and noted the interest of Chile and Argentina in fostering closer relations with this Community.

The Ministers commended Jamaica for its role as CARICOM's spokesman in the Rio Group and agreed that a continued presence by the Region should be secured when Jamaica demits its tenure as the Region's representative. In this regard, they noted with appreciation the indication of interest expressed by Trinidad and Tobago to be the next CARICOM representative to the Rio Group.

The Ministers expressed their determination to continue their active participation in the other hemispheric groupings in order to strengthen cooperation at all levels.

CARICOM-CENTRAL AMERICA RELATIONS

The Ministers noted the most recent developments in CARICOM-Central American Relations, particularly, the ongoing collaboration between Secretariats of the two sub-regions in advancing concrete action on priority issues.

They authorised the Secretariat to enter into discussions with the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) for the purpose of achieving agreement on the terms of a basic cooperation agreement between CARICOM and SIECA.

The Ministers advanced the preparations for the Second CARICOM-Central America Ministerial Conference scheduled to be held in Jamaica, on 27-28 May, 1993. They agreed that CARICOM Member States should be fully

represented at the Meeting and agreed on a joint approach in dealing with the various items on the proposed Agenda.

They also agreed that, in pursuing activities designed to strengthen relations between the two sub-regional groups, more emphasis should be placed on the role of the private sector and greater people-to-people contact.

BANANAS

The Ministers agreed to issue the attached Statement on Bananas (see appendix).

BELIZE-GUATEMALA RELATIONS

The Ministers noted with appreciation the status report by the Government of Belize on developments in relations between Belize and Guatemala since their last Meeting.

They noted that relations between Belize and Guatemala continue to improve, providing an impetus for greater CARICOM-Central America Cooperation.

They expressed satisfaction that Guatemala's recognition of Belize's Independence and Sovereignty as well as its establishment of diplomatic relations with Belize was judicially recognised as valid by the constitutional court of Guatemala.

The Ministers reaffirmed support for the Independence, Sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize and urged all friendly governments to maintain full commitment and support for Belize's security concerns, taking into account evolving political circumstances.

GUYANA - VENEZUELA RELATIONS

The Ministers noted with appreciation the continuing cordial development in Guyana-Venezuela relations. In this regard, they took special note of the contribution of the recent official visit by President Cheddi Jagan to Venezuela.

The Ministers also welcomed the decision of the two Presidents to pursue actively the search for a peaceful resolution to the controversy over the border under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General through the Good Offices of Sir Alister McIntyre.

The Ministers also reaffirmed support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana.

RELATIONS WITH CUBA

The Ministers reviewed the development of the Community's relations with Cuba against the background of the decision of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government to establish a CARICOM-Cuba Joint Commission. The Ministers also considered the debate in the international fora on the matter of Cuba's place in the Inter-American System in a manner that would be informed by the need for cooperation, and also would be in keeping with the principles being observed within the Inter-American System.

The Ministers considered a Draft Agreement relating to the establishment of the Joint Commission and agreed to defer the matter.

HAITI

The Ministers were briefed on recent developments on Haiti by the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Director of Political Affairs of the United Nations.

The Ministers reiterated their condemnation of the seizure of power by the military regime in Haiti and their serious concern at the continuing escalating violations of the human rights of Haitian citizens.

The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the critical initiatives currently being undertaken by the UN and the OAS towards resolution of the Haitian political crisis and recognised the special role played by CARICOM in this matter.

The Ministers urged the international community to intensify measures against the de facto regime in collective effort to bring about an early resolution of the Haitian political crisis.

The Ministers agreed on the desirability of bringing the question of the situation in Haiti to the UN Security Council for its consideration following the appropriate consultations with the OAS.

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES

The Ministers accepted certain guidelines on the establishment, membership, objectives, and structure of an Association of Caribbean States (ACS) for consideration by the Heads of Government as a basis for more concrete terms

of reference and for initiating discussion with the potential ACS membership.

The Ministers noted that the probe of potential ACS States to determine their degree of interest would be commenced by the former Prime Minister of Jamaica, Michael Manley, at the beginning of June, complemented by similar consultations on the part of the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community.

The Ministers stated that the interests of the potential ACS membership would be better served if the Association goes beyond formulating strategies for functional cooperation by taking steps towards strengthening their bargaining power by expanding their regional market base.

JOINT/COORDINATED EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

The Ministers considered the issue of joint coordinated external representation by CARICOM Member States in Third Countries as well as CARICOM participation in the Governing Bodies of International Organisations of prime importance. In their discussion, the Ministers were informed of the outcome of a Senior Level Diplomatic Workshop which was held during the period of the Meeting.

The Ministers in expressing their continuing appreciation of the merits of joint/coordinated external representation for the conduct of bilateral and multilateral relations in selected cities. They also recognised the need for some measure of flexibility and for the development of options to meet varying circumstances.

It was also agreed that the issue of joint/coordinated external representation should be further advanced through the Working Group established for the purpose and through bilateral initiatives as Member States consider possible. The Ministers agreed to the designation of Dr. the Honourable Paul Robertson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jamaica, to advance work in this area in conjunction with the Secretariat.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The Ministers noted the issues and developments arising out of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992, including the establishment of a 53-member Commission on Sustainable Development, the designation of a UN Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the establishment by UNDP of the "Capacity 21" Programme to assist developing countries to respond to environment and development issues.

The Ministers urged Member States to participate fully in the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing Countries in Barbados, in April 1994, and called for the addition of another Preparatory Conference in 1994 to ensure proper and adequate preparation for the Global Conference. In this regard, they urged the full participation of all Member States in the Regional Preparatory Meeting scheduled for Trinidad and Tobago in 1993.

The Ministers recommended that Member States ensure that the process of national consultations be strengthened in order that all sections of the population be made aware of the important environmental issues to be

addressed. They requested that regional proposals regarding the environment be framed with more specificity and focussed on issues such as coastal erosion and marine pollution.

They took note of the fact that CARICOM has succeeded in preventing a shipment of plutonium waste from travelling through the Caribbean waters. They reiterated their determination to resist the transportation of nuclear, hazardous and toxic waste through the Caribbean.

CARICOM-UNITED STATES RELATIONS

The Ministers took the opportunity to review the complex of issues which underpinned the relationship between the United States of America and CARICOM Member States.

Ministers noted the progress towards the creation of a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as well as the introduction of HR 1403, the Caribbean Basin Free Trade Agreements Act 1993 (the Gibbons Bill). While Ministers expressed their appreciation for the provision relating to "NAFTA parity" in the Bill, particular concern was expressed regarding the short transition period proposed in the Bill.

Ministers expressed the view that, during the ratification process of NAFTA in the United States, some mechanism should be found to preserve the benefits now enjoyed under CBI and to extend such benefits to products now excluded from this arrangement.

The Ministers agreed to alert the new US administration to the priority areas of concern for CARICOM in the matrix of US/CARICOM relations, including the drastic reduction in aid being proposed for the next financial year.

They agreed to use all available means, including the key West Indians in the US to bring these concerns to attention.

The Ministers also looked forward to a mutually beneficial relationship with the new US administration in all areas of concern, including the GATT, external aid, the environment, illicit drugs and other hemispheric issues.

RELATIONS WITH CANADA

The Meeting reviewed the developments in the Region's relationship with Canada against the background of the traditional special relationship between the Caribbean Community and Canada.

The Ministers took note of the impact on this relationship of the global changes underway and particularly of the recent decisions of the Government of Canada to reduce the resources allocated to the Region under the International Assistance Envelope (IAE).

The Ministers called for a early convening of the Seventh Meeting of the Joint Trade and Economic Committee (JTEC). It expressed the view that every effort be made to develop further the relationship between the Community and Canada in all areas.

RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

The Ministers welcomed the arrangements being contemplated for convening an Informal Meeting in Jamaica on 23 July 1993, between representatives of the Caribbean Community and a Japanese delegation with a view to the improvement of trade, and investment opportunities. The Committee agreed that Member States should endeavour to

attend the meeting and submit proposals for inclusion on the Agenda.

The Committee also took note of an invitation from Japan to Member States to attend a Seminar in Port-of-Spain on 8 June 1993 at which an expose on Japan's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) would be provided.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Ministers reviewed recent developments in South Africa and condemned the assassination of Chris Hani and noted with concern that this assassination and other acts of violence made the resumption of all-party negotiations even more urgent, and urged the Government of South Africa to make an early announcement of a date for general elections. Ministers reiterated that the phasing out of sanctions depended upon real and irreversible progress towards a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

They also noted with regret, the death of Mr. Oliver Tambo, a former President of the African National Congress (ANC). The Ministers recognised his substantial contribution in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa in particular with respect to the system of Apartheid in South Africa. As a tribute to this great freedom fighter, a minute's silence was observed on his passing.

FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The Ministers condemned the atrocities being perpetuated in Bosnia-Herzegovina, particularly, ethnic cleansing directed against the Muslim population by the Serbs. The Ministers declared their support for all actions being taken by the United Nations to both alleviate the

suffering and to bring this horrendous conflict to an end. In this regard, the Ministers endorsed the latest United Nations initiative to establish an International Tribunal to deal with the War Crimes taking place in the territories of former Yugoslavia.

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Ministers noted the increasing instability on the Korean Peninsula and called on both sides to exercise prudence in their relations with each other. Ministers also called on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reconsider its recent decision to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, in light of international trends towards more universal application of the major disarmament treaties.

ILLICIT USE AND TRAFFIC OF DRUGS

The Ministers noted some of the positive developments which have taken place in the area of combatting the trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs. They underscored the need to pay even further attention to the problem at hand. They agreed that efforts to reduce and eventually eradicate this problem should be directed in two major areas, firstly, to law enforcement which encompasses accession to International Drug Control Conventions and, secondly, to Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) adopting more innovative programmes to deal with this menace.

DECOLONISATION

Foreign Ministers, having received a delegation of the UN Special Committee of 24, reviewed the current developments concerning the decolonisation process of the United Nations. Taking into account the ongoing dialogue within the international community for a revitalization of the General Assembly and in that context, the establishment of working groups of the Special Committee of 24 and the comments of Member States in the Fourth Committee; noting also the position taken by the administrative powers and the leaders of the Caribbean Non Self-Governing territories that they are primarily concerned with economic and financial viability. Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the inalienable right of the people of those territories to determine for themselves their future political status.

YEAR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The Ministers noted the designation by the UN of 1993 as the Year of Indigenous Peoples and urged that every effort be made to assist them in their development as a People.

APPRECIATION

The Ministers expressed their profound appreciation to the Government and People of Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique, for the hospitality extended to them during their stay in that country and for the excellent arrangements made for the conduct of their Meeting.

DATE AND VENUE

The Ministers accepted the offer of the Government of Belize to host their Twentieth Regular Meeting in May 1994.

APPENDIX

STATEMENT ON BANANAS

Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs Meeting in the Caribbean Community meeting in Grenada on 10-11 May 1993, reaffirmed the tremendous importance of unimpeded access to the European market for Caribbean bananas to the economic and social well-being of large numbers of people in CARICOM countries, and the disastrous national and regional implications of any denial or diminution of such access. They voiced strong concern about the various initiatives being pursued by certain banana producing countries of Latin and Central America, in vigorously opposing the regime adopted by the EC, to guarantee CARICOM banana producers access to the EC market under the Lome Convention.

They agreed on the absolute necessity to protect the special advantage of preferential access for their commodities, including bananas and sugar to the markets of the European Community and of North America.

They expressed their unreserved support for the CARICOM banana exporting States, in steps to counter the negative effects of the Latin American exporting countries.

While emphasising the continued need for dialogue with the Central American sub-region on the banana issue, the Ministers emphasised the desirability of CARICOM discussing the issue frankly with Central America at every available forum, and more specifically at the forthcoming CARICOM-Central America Ministerial Conference being held in Jamaica.

The Ministers noted the increasingly important role of the GATT in shaping international trade relations and called on all Member States party to the GATT to give full support to CARICOM Banana Exporting countries in discussions in the GATT on the Banana issue.